

Brezhnev's Successor Named

Ex-KGB Chief Andropov Elected Leader of Party

From Times Wire Services

MOSCOW—Former KGB chief Yuri V. Andropov was swiftly and unanimously elected today to succeed Leonid I. Brezhnev as Communist Party leader and vowed to safeguard the Soviet Union with “the uncrushable might of the Soviet armed forces.”

Within hours of the official announcement of Brezhnev's death, the Central Committee met in a secret emergency session and unanimously elected Andropov, 68, as the party's new general secretary.

The unusual speed with which the party acted seemed designed to assure the Soviet public—and the world—of continuity, stability and unity in the Kremlin.

Brezhnev, 75, the nation's leader for 18 years, died Wednesday of a heart attack but his death was not announced until Thursday, 26½ hours later.

Nominated by Chief Rival

Andropov was elected to the most powerful job in the nation on the nomination of his chief rival, Konstantin U. Chernenko, 71, whom many expect to be named to Brezhnev's other post as president. The Supreme Soviet, which chooses the nation's president, is scheduled to meet Nov. 23.

Andropov promised that “he will devote all his energy, knowledge and experience of life to the successful implementation of the program of building communism,” the official Tass press agency said.

“We know well that you cannot beg for peace from imperialists,” Andropov said in a speech before the Central Committee. “It can only be safeguarded by relying on the uncrushable might of the Soviet armed forces.”

He also pledged himself “to ensuring continuity in solving the tasks of further enhancing the economic and defense might of the U.S.S.R., improving the welfare of the Soviet people, strengthening peace and carrying out all the Leninist domestic and foreign policies that had been pursued under Leonid Brezhnev,” the communique said.

“In this situation, the duty of each of us, the duty of each Communist is to consolidate our ranks more closely . . . for the good of the Soviet people, for the strengthening of peace, for the triumph of communism,” he said.

Immediately after the speech, the party leaders went to pay their respects to Brezhnev, who lay in state at the House of Unions near the Kremlin. (Story on Page 2).

Kirilenko Stands Apart

As Andropov and Chernenko stood with other members of the Politburo while paying respects to Brezhnev's widow, Andrei P. Kirilenko, who disappeared mysteriously from the Politburo portrait gallery for last Sunday's Revolution Day festivities, stood apart, witnesses said.

This appears to signal that the 76-year-old Kirilenko is no longer a member of the Kremlin ruling circle.

As head of the KGB, Andropov was responsible for the crackdown on Soviet dissidents, silencing them by criminal prosecutions and forced exile.

A Soviet intellectual, asked what he thought about Andropov, once said, “I try not to think about Andropov at all, because I don't want him to think about me.”

Andropov carried out a number of party assignments at home and abroad, making his name as ambassador to Budapest during the 1956 uprising when he reportedly told Hungarian leaders that Soviet troops would not intervene. A few hours later the Red Army moved in to crush the revolt.

Andropov gave up control of the sprawling KGB secret police network last spring to take up full-time duties in the top circle of the ruling hierarchy. Observers saw the move as an attempt to separate himself from the domestic police and foreign intelligence agency.

Andropov moved to the fore in the leadership race when he was chosen Thursday to head the committee arranging the funeral Monday of the 75-year-old president and Communist Party chief.